



FIRST NATIONS



Starting Out As An Artist

BY MUSICNSW

music^{NSW}

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This resource provides a guide to help artists build a strong foundation for their music career, covering goals, identity, audience, and early career planning.

So you are a musician and you want a career in music but you're not sure if you're on the right track? It can feel overwhelming, so here are some things to consider on your journey (they might not all apply to you right now).

You gotta have goals!

What would you like to achieve and what does success look like to you? You may want to sell out stadiums and take over the world but if you're just starting out, keep it simple and achievable. Set goals like releasing a single or album, getting played on radio or performing locally or at a festival. Think about your 1st year and 5-year plan.

What is your act/band name?

Is it your name or will you develop one for your act/band. If you're making up a name, is it available? Top tip – Search online to see if the name is already taken.

What is your brand?

Think about what your act/band is all about. What is your style or music genre? Who is your audience? How will you connect with them? What makes you stand out? (Perhaps you're a metal band that loves cats?) What have you achieved so far? These are all good things to think about in the early stages so you know how to position yourself and talk about your art.

How can people contact you?

Have you got an email address specifically for your artist/band?

How can people find you?

What online and social media presence will you have? Set up accounts to claim them for your artist name as soon as you can.

What do you want people to know?

Develop a bio and press shots that match your brand and goals.

How will you let people know about your music and shows?

Marketing and promotion is essential if you are looking to build a career and an audience for your music. There are lots of different ways to get the word out about what you're doing, from social media through to PR and advertising. Check out our [Marketing & Publicity info sheet](#) for more.

Playing live

Live shows are a great way to meet people and hone your playing chops. If you're just starting out, are there any local open mic nights you could play at? Or reach out to local acts to see if you can book in a support slot. Alternatively check out your local venues and book some shows. Not played live before? Check out our [how to play a live show](#) [here](#).

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Connect with your community

Tell your friends your plans, go to shows and talk to people, get involved in your local music scene and build new connections. The music industry is quite small and it's amazing how many new opportunities can come from connecting with other people.

Prepare to share your music

Before you share your recorded music or perform live, it's important to get set up.

Funding

Grants are available to support artist careers. Check out our [funding calendar](#) to see what grants are open.

Some things to consider:

- Get an ABN. Being a professional musician is like having your own small business. If you are selling music or playing live shows, you should have a dedicated ABN so you can [invoice](#) and get paid. [You can find out more here.](#)
- Think about how you will record and distribute your music – where will your songs live and how can people buy them? You should think about how you want to share your music and learn about how to make that happen, such as recording your tracks and getting your songs on to streaming platforms using a [digital aggregator](#), or getting physical releases made such as vinyl, cassette or CD.
- Register with APRA AMCOS and PPCA If you have written your own songs that are recorded, being played live or getting radio play, you should register them with APRA AMCOS so you can get paid royalties. If you have commercially released recorded music, you should also register for PPCA.

Looking for more resources?
Find more resources like this
one at musicnsw.com/resources

MusicNSW works, creates and listens on unceded Aboriginal land across the state. We honour elders past and present and acknowledge all First Nations peoples as the original music makers, storytellers and knowledge holders. Always was, always will be.

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